

enemies, and their children and children's children became enemies of his memory.

Jefferson's next measure, was perhaps as important in its far reaching effects as the one just mentioned. He introduced into the legislature and carried through it a bill for the naturalization of foreigners. The conditions of becoming a citizen were made easier than any other government perhaps had ever before dared to make them. The alien was simply to* show a residence of two years within the State, declare his intentions of remaining in the State, and give assurances of his good faith and loyalty. Minors, the children of naturalized parents, were admitted to citizenship without legal formalities, as were minors who came to America without their parents. The extremely liberal features of this bill were embodied by Congress in its first naturalization law, and incorporated in all subsequent legislations respecting citizenship. Notwithstanding the war and the unfavorable naturalization laws, immigrants were coming into Virginia at this time by thousands and it was not an unwise political move upon the part of Jefferson to come forward as the champion of the strangers' rights in their new home. It is not suggested, however, that he was induced by ulterior political reasons to introduce the bill. Easy naturalization* and easy expatriation! were a part of his general theory of easy government.

The next act of Jefferson in the legislature was one that he regarded—and students of politics will agree with him—as being of more importance than the Declaration of Independence. He brought up the subject of religious liberty, attempting to secure the enactment of the following just and comprehensive law: "No man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, ministry, or place whatsoever; nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burdened in his body or goods; nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion; and

*See Naturalization, page 314. †See Expatriation, page 212.